

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Natarajan et al. (USPN 6,584,502) (hereinafter "Natarajan").

The grounds for rejecting the claims in the application are citations to materials in Natarajan placed next to elements of the claims. No explanation is provided to show how the cited materials in Natarajan are applicable for rejecting the claims. The discussion below will address the claim rejections to the best of Applicant's understanding.

Claim 1 recites:

A method comprising:
assigning a plurality of devices to a group;
assigning at least one event-handling policy to the group, wherein the assigned policy is associated with each of the plurality of devices in the group; and
evaluating a current state of each device before the assigned policy is applied to the device.

Natarajan describes a technique for providing automatic event notification of changing network conditions to network elements in an adaptive, feedback-based data network.

In rejecting Claim 1, the Office Action provides several citations in Natarajan that allegedly correspond to various elements of Claim 1. (Office

Action, paragraph 3). However, none of these citations points to materials in Natarajan that describe the corresponding elements in Claim 1. Neither does the Office Action provide an explanation as to how the cited materials in Natarajan are applicable for rejecting Claim 1.

For example, to reject “assigning a plurality of devices to a group” in Claim 1, the Office Action cites figure 2, element 260 and 202; figure 5C, element 254; and col. 4, lines 49-54. In figure 2, element 260 is labeled as “ADMIN” and element 202 is labeled as “User”. However, these elements are not assigned to a group. In figure 5C, element 254 is labeled as “Policy engine”. Col. 4, lines 49-54 of Natarajan states

FIG. 1 shows an example of a frame relay network. The frame relay network may be thought of as comprising a group of frame relay virtual circuits for transmitting data between a first user/computer system and a second user/computer system. A frame relay virtual circuit represents a high-speed packet switching path used in wide area networks.

Applicant respectfully submits that none of these materials cited by the Office Action describes “assigning a plurality of devices to a group.”

For rejecting “assigning at least one event-handling policy to the group, wherein the assigned policy is associated with each of the plurality of devices in the group”, the Office Action cites col. 14, lines 33-52 in addition to repeating some of the citations for the previous element. The materials at col. 14, lines 33-52 describe a policy engine and various application specific policy plug-ins. However, the cited materials do not describe assigning a policy to a group.

For rejecting “evaluating a current state of each device before the assigned policy is applied to the device”, the Office Action cites figure 17, element 1718

and element 1728; and col. 31, lines 35-67. Figure 17 shows a flow diagram of how a feedback-based network adapts to changing conditions in the network as a video conference is initiated between two users. (Natarajan, Col. 29, lines 60-63). Element 1718 is labeled as "Evaluate effectiveness of current policy in controlling number of dropped packets for Links A, B, C, D" and element 1728 is labeled as "Dynamically modify current policy via ADMIN". The materials at col. 31, lines 35-67 describe a method for evaluating the effectiveness of a frame relay CIR (committed information rate) policy. Thus, the cited materials, taken together, merely describe the effectiveness evaluation of a policy. However, the materials do not describe or suggest "evaluating a current state of each device before the assigned policy is applied to the device", as recited in Claim 1.

For the reasons stated above, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 1 is not anticipated by Natarajan and is allowable. Given that Claims 2-9 depend from Claim 1, Claims 2-9 are also allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 18 stands rejected based on the same reasons given for rejecting Claim 1. Thus, Applicant submits that independent Claim 18 and dependent Claims 19-20 are also allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 10 recites:

An apparatus comprising:
a group of devices having an associated event-handling policy;
an event log configured to store event data; and
a management module coupled to the group of devices and the event log, wherein a current state of each device in the group of devices is evaluated by the management module before the event-handling policy is applied to the device.

To reject “a group of devices having an associated event-handling policy”, the Office Action cites figure 5C, element 254 in Natarajan. Element 254 is a “Policy Engine”, which is a decision-making (logical) component of a feedback based adaptive network and is implemented on a policy server. (See Natarajan, col. 14, lines 5-19). However, element 254 cited by the Office Action does not describe the “group of devices” recited in Claim 10.

To reject the “management module” in Claim 10, the Office Action cites in Natarajan figure 2, elements 252, 260, and 262; figures 6 and 7; col. 14, lines 34-50; and col. 19, lines 1-16. Elements 252, 260 and 262 are “Data Store”, “ADMIN”, and “Monitor”, respectively. None of these elements is “coupled to the group of devices and the event log” as recited in Claim 10.

Figure 6 shows a flow diagram for an initialization procedure. Figure 7 shows a flow diagram for an event registration procedure. Neither of these procedures discloses that “a current state of each device in the group of devices is evaluated by the management module”, as recited in Claim 10.

As discussed above, the materials at col. 14, lines 33-52 describe a policy engine and various application specific policy plug-ins. Col. 19, lines 1-16 describes the procedure illustrated in Figure 6 for initializing network elements. None of the cited materials describes the elements recited in Claim 10.

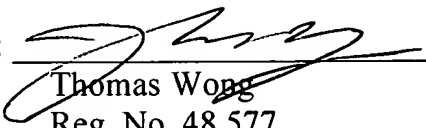
For the reasons stated above, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 10 is not anticipated by Natarajan and is allowable. Given that Claims 11-17 depend from Claim 10, Claims 11-17 are also allowable for at least the same reasons.

Conclusion

Claims 1-20 are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests the issuance of the subject application. Should any matter in this case remain unresolved, the undersigned attorney respectfully requests a telephone conference with the Examiner to resolve any such outstanding matter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: 2/4/2004

By: 
Thomas Wong
Reg. No. 48,577
(206) 315- 4001 X106